

Message Text

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54

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 EA-09 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 /024 W

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R 011044Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 283

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

UNCLAS BANGKOK 24625

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (KNOWLTON, THERESA)

SUBJ: W/W DEATH CASE OF THERESA KNOWLTON

REF: HONG KONG 10188

1. AUGUST 26 BANGKOK POST CARRIES STORY BASED ON AN AUGUST "ASIA WEEK" ARTICLE (POUCHED TO SCA/SCS TOGETHER WITH SIMILAR SPREAD IN AUGUST 13 "FAREAST ECONOMIC REVIEW") THAT INDICATIONS ARE GROWING THAT SUSPECT MASS MURDERERS ALAN GAUTIER AND MONIQUE LECLERC MAY BE HELD FOR TRIAL IN INDIA BEFORE EXTRADITION TO THAILAND IS CONSIDERED. THE ITEM AVERRS THAT BOTH NEPAL AND THAILAND WILL HAVE TO "VIE FOR EXTRADITION RIGHTS...WHEN AND IF INDIAN AUTHORITIES EVER FINISH WITH GAUTIER AND HIS ALLEGED ACCOMPLICES." THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO NOTE THAT GAUTIER AND COMPANY APPARENTLY USED BANGKOK AS HEADQUARTERS BUT MADE FREQUENT TRIPS OUT OF THE COUNTRY TO HONG KONG, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, NEPAL, AND INDIA--OFTEN USING THE PASSPORTS OF THEIR VICTIMS TO TRAVEL.

2. THERESA KNOWLTON IS NOT MENTIONED BY NAME IN THE ARTICLES BUT THE AVAILABLE DETAILS OF HER DEATH ARE ACCURATELY RENDERED.

3. THE EMBASSY'S EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE REMAINS HAVE BEEN MADE DIFFICULT DUE TO THE FACT THAT WHEN THE BODY WAS BROUGHT TO BANGKOK AFTER ITS DISCOVERY ON THE BEACH AT PATTAYA, (IN NOVEMBER 1975), THEY WERE DEPOSITED AT THE MORGUE IN A HOSPITAL UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE HEALTH MINISTRY RATHER THAN THE POLICE HOSPITAL WHICH IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE INTERIOR

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MINISTRY. WITH COMPLETION OF ALL FORENSIC WORK ONLY REQUIRING ONE

MORE PUBLIC HEALTH DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE WHO UNFORTUNATELY HAS BEEN ABSENT, THE POLICE AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ACCEDE TO OUR REQUEST FOR RELEASE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MORE FORENSIC TESTS WERE REQUIRED OF MISS KNOWLTON'S REMAINS WHEN THE GAUTIER GANG WAS APPREHENDED IN INDIA AND EVIDENCE CAME TO LIGHT THAT DRUGGING HAD BEEN A COMMON TOOL IN THE ROBBERY OF OTHER VICTIMS.

4. WE BELIEVE WE HAVE NOW IDENTIFIED THE HOLD UP AND ARE APPROACHING SENIOR HEALTH OFFICIALS TO OVERCOME THE BUREAUCRATIC BOTTLENECK.

5. WILL KEEP THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER ADDRESSEES INFORMED.
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